

## Reviewing the Issue of Class Rank:

To best represent the academic endeavors of our students in their post graduation years, a committee comprised of Parkland administrators, counselors, teachers, parents and students reviewed studies from schools similar to Parkland regarding the class rank system and its impact in meeting students' needs in their post high school considerations. Regarding class rank and weighted grades, our core committee also reviewed the admission considerations of colleges/universities. As part of this undertaking, the committee agreed to gather and collect information to make an informed recommendation and that we would not make recommendations unless they served Parkland students well.

Throughout our committee work, it became increasingly clear that:

- 1- There is no right or best system.
- 2- Class ranking systems are in decline; what was once a common practice is now instituted by less than 50% of high schools with more schools eliminating their ranking practice each year. Of the twenty-six like high schools responding to our survey, only eight continue to rank students.
- 3- Colleges utilize many factors in determining a student's request for admissions. However, the most common components of their process include test scores (SAT/ACT), grade point average and participation in the most rigorous curriculum offered.

We then reflected on our existing system as compared to the current practices used by colleges/universities and other similar school districts, as well as how we could best serve all of our students. The result of this undertaking revealed to us that we could offer a system that better serves all students in PSD.

We all share in a similar desire to have our students strive to reach their greatest potential, both inside and outside of their classrooms. **Since increasingly more schools are opting not to report class rank in the student transcript, the Parkland Board of School Directors at the July 2009 public meeting voted to eliminate the public reporting of class rank starting with the Class of 2013, and provide students in the classes of 2010, 2011, and 2012 the option of reporting class rank or not reporting class rank on their student transcripts.** Subsequently, beginning with the Class of 2013, there will be no recognition of a valedictorian and salutatorian; instead the Parkland School District will recognize the top 2-3% of the students in the graduating class at commencement. This is being done in an effort to recognize more of our top students.

The purpose of the changes adopted by the Parkland Board of School Directors is designed to help all students in the Parkland School District. In a high academically achieving district like Parkland, class rank can and has hindered the admissions process for some of our students. This option to report or not to report class rank will be decided by each student in these graduating classes. When rank is not sent to colleges, it requires

college and universities to study the individual student transcript and high school profile, and we are confident universities will see the strength of our students' academic and extra/co-curricular efforts.

Another change approved by the Board of Directors affecting the Class of 2013 is the development of a three-tiered quality point system for student grading (see attached). Currently, students earn the same quality points for a final grade regardless of the percentage earned as a final grade. This varies based on the rigor of the academic course level taken. Example:

Student 1	Honors Earth Science final average 90% earns 5 quality points.
Student 2	Honors Earth Science final average 97% earns the same 5 quality points.
Student 3	Earth Science CP/GHP final average 90% earns 4 quality points.
Student 4	Earth Science CP/GHP final average is 97% and earns 4 quality points.

The three tiered quality point grading scale will take into account the rigor of the academic class as well as the student for his/her effort with the course taken. Example, using some students noted above:

Student 1	Honors Earth Science final average 97% earns 4.5 QP
Student 2	Honors Earth Science final average 90% earns 4.17 QP
Student 3	Earth Science CP/GHP final average 97% earns 4.0 QP
Student 4	Earth Science CP/GHP final average 90% earns 3.67 QP

The new three tiered system awards students for taking the most challenging courses and also rewards students for their effort within the rigorous courses they have taken. The new transcript for the class of 2013 identifies the academic rigor of the classes, the activities and community service of your child. This information, when measured against your child's GPA, becomes the criteria that colleges use for admittance to their schools.

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### THREE-TIERED QUALITY POINT SYSTEM

GRADE	NUMERIC RANGE	STANDARD GRADE POINTS	HONORS GRADE POINTS	AP GRADE POINTS
A+	97-100	4.00	4.50	5.00
A	93-96	4.00	4.50	5.00
A-	90-92	3.67	4.17	4.67
B+	87-89	3.33	3.83	4.33
B	83-86	3.00	3.50	4.00
B-	80-82	2.67	3.17	3.67
C+	77-79	2.33	2.83	3.33
C	73-76	2.00	2.50	3.00
C-	70-72	1.67	2.17	2.67
D	60-69	1.00	1.00	1.00
F	0-59	0.00	0.00	0.00

The rationale for the weighting of grades in AP courses slightly more heavily than that of Honors courses is as follows: For a course to be labeled AP, it must receive approval via an outside audit conducted by the Educational Policy Improvement Center through The College Board. Each teacher of an AP course must submit a syllabus that meets all the defined criteria. This process is intended to validate that an AP course meets the expectations of a college level course. This external review warrants a heavier weight than courses that do not have a similar evaluation.

The AP and Honors courses reflect the level of rigor based on the weighted grading scale. For all other courses, the level of academic rigor will be reflected in the course descriptions provided in the course registration booklets produced on an annual basis.